



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

SESSION 1864-5.

Ninth Meeting, March 27th, 1865.

SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON, K.C.B., PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*W. Shelford Fitzwilliam, Esq., and H. B. George, Esq.*

ELECTIONS.—*P. N. Bernard, Esq.; Charles T. Bidwell, Esq.; David P. McEuen, Esq.; Samuel Perkes, Esq.; John Player, Esq.; Philip D. Tuckett, Esq.; Swinburne Ward, Esq.; Dr. Garth Wilkinson.*

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY.—‘*Reise der Oesterreichischen Fregatte Novara um die Erde*,’ ‘*Geologie*,’ in zwei Theile; presented by the author, Prof. Hochstetter. ‘*Gérard Rohlfs Tagebuch seiner Reise durch Marokko nach Twat*,’ presented by Dr. Petermann. ‘*Notes on the Maories of New Zealand*,’ by Col. Sir J. E. Alexander, K.C.L.S., &c.; ‘*Die Geologie in Russland*,’ von Gr. von Helmersen: both presented by their respective authors. Continuations of ‘*Journals*,’ ‘*Transactions*,’ &c.

ACCESSIONS TO THE MAP-ROOM.—Five sheets of the Government Map of the Netherlands, viz., No. 7, Groningen; No. 8, Nieuweschans; No. 11, Heerenveen; No. 10, Alkmaar; No. 47, Kadzand; and 4 books. Map of the Colony of Natal, surveyed by Captain Grantham, R.E. Ordnance Maps, 81 sheets.

EXHIBITIONS.—Panoramic views of Smith Sound and the Northern parts of Baffin’s Bay, by Capt. E. A. Inglefield, in the *Isabel*, 1852. MS. map of the Greenland Coast, inhabited by the Arctic Highlanders, drawn by Erasmus York, under the superintendence of Admiral E. Ommanney, on board H.M.S. *Resolute*.

The PRESIDENT, in opening the proceedings, said—Gentlemen, our main object on the present occasion is to obtain a fair and full discussion of the relative value of the two projects for reaching the North Pole which have been brought under the consideration of geographers and other men of science—the one by Captain Sherard Osborn, the other by Dr. Petermann. To Captain Osborn we have expressed our deep obligations for his spirited and able endeavour to revive the desire felt by all true geographers to complete their acquaintance with the North Polar regions, in which the scientific branch of

the navy has been so distinguished. The plan which he propounded was, as you know, to proceed in ships to Smith Sound, at the head of Baffin's Bay, and, leaving them there in safety, to explore northwards along the west coast of Greenland in sledges and boats. This plan, in addition to the various good scientific results to be obtained, has the further merit of calming the fears of the timid, who dread a repetition of the sad catastrophe of Franklin, by showing them that there is no analogy between his expedition and that by which it is now contemplated to reach the North Pole. The former was an effort to force a passage with ships through landlocked icy channels; that of Sherard Osborn is to avoid all such danger by advancing in sledges from ships placed in safe stations; it being a fact that amid the many sledging-parties who traversed thousands of miles upon the ice in search of Franklin not a life was lost. The other project, or that which has been advocated by the accomplished geographer Dr. Petermann, is to try to reach the North Pole *via* Spitzbergen, getting through the pack-ice to the north of that island in a steam-vessel. His first letter on this subject was partially read at a former meeting, and was published at length in weekly newspapers; but when it came under our consideration, the time of the assembly was so much occupied in discussing the natural history questions which the ethnological memoir of Mr. Markham elicited that naval officers and other Arctic explorers who were present were debarred from delivering their opinions on the relative merits of the two plans. Since then Dr. Petermann has addressed a second letter to me on this subject, which will first be read, and then the naval officers are expected so to express their opinions as to enable the Councils of the Royal Geographical Society and of the other scientific bodies who advocate a North Polar expedition, to adopt that which they consider the best scheme for the accomplishment of this great object. Now, although I know that there are differences of opinion among the Arctic officers who are present as to which of the two plans offers the best line of research, let me assure this meeting that these gallant men are united in the belief that, if a well-fitted expedition be sent out, success would crown the effort. They well know that the accumulations of floating ice, which in old times were considered impassable barriers, have been traversed by ordinary sailing-vessels, and that in the memorable Antarctic voyage of James Ross packs of ice several hundred miles in width were passed through, that intrepid navigator reaching an open ocean beyond. The question, then, to be debated this evening is, whether the sledging expedition to the north of Smith Sound and along the west coast of Greenland, or the effort to traverse the pack-ice to the north of Spitzbergen, or the most northern point reached by Sir Edward Parry, is to be preferred, it being recollected that in the days of the last-mentioned great navigator steam power had not been applied to ships. Happily we have still among us distinguished Arctic explorers who have been both in the seas of Spitzbergen and those of Baffin's Bay; and I am sure that we shall obtain from them such a hearty concurrence in our scheme as will, with the appeal of the other men of science, induce the British Government to fit out a well-found North Polar expedition, which, in advancing several branches of science, will sustain that spirit of adventure which has always been the mainstay of our maritime greatness.

The first Paper was as follows—

1. *Second Letter to Sir Roderick I. Murchison, on the subject of North Polar Exploration.* By Dr. A. PETERMANN (Honorary Corresponding Member R.G.S.).

THIS letter was intended as supplementary to the first communication of the author on the same subject, and to adduce further facts